GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1589
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2001
INDO-NEPAL TIES
A. VENKATESH NAIK;ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL;GADDE RAMAMOHAN;GOWDAR MALLIKARJUNAPPA;M.V.V.S MURTHI;RAJESH RANJAN (PAPPU YADAV);RAMSHETH THAKUR;SHIVAJI MANE;SHYAMA SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any meeting between the Foreign Secretaries of India and Nepal took place recently;

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof;

(c) the details of anti-India riots which Nepal witnessed recently;

(d) the reasons therefor; and

(e) the efforts made/being made to improve Indo-Nepal relations?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) to (e) A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (A) TO (E) OF THE ANSWER TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 15 BE ANSWERED ON 07.03.2001 ON `INDO-NEPAL TIES`

India-Nepal Foreign Secretary Level Talks were held on January 30 and 31, 2001 in New Delhi.

The two sides reviewed the progress in implementing the understandings reached during the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal to India in July/August, 2000 and agreed to expedite pending issues. In this context, it was reiterated that existing institutional mechanisms for dialogue and interaction between the two countries would be utilised fully in order to achieve quicker progress on issues under discussion.

The two sides reiterated their determination to expand and diversify their bilateral trade, economic co-operation and investment ties. It was agreed that operational difficulties in the implementation of the existing Agreements would be reviewed and addressed in a prompt and constructive manner. The two sides agreed to intensify their co-operation to control unauthorised trade.

The two sides also reiterated their determination to work closely and fight the scourge of terrorism. They renewed their commitment not to allow their respective territories to be used for activities directed against or prejudicial to the security of the other.

The two sides had a useful exchange of views on issues relating to the India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship as directed by the two Prime Ministers. They discussed various aspects of the Treaty in a candid and open manner and agreed to continue their discussions keeping in mind the perceptions, concerns and interests of both sides and their close and friendly relations.

Other aspects of bilateral relations were also discussed, including, demarcation of the boundary, motor vehicular transportation and water resources.

In the last week of December, 2001, demonstrations were held in Kathmandu and other places of Nepal protesting against a rumour concerning anti-Nepal remarks purported to have been made by Indian film star Hrithik Roshan.The rumour was without any foundation whatsoever and was denied by Mr Roshan. The demonstrations took on an anti-India colour and resulted in damage to the property of people of Indian origin in Nepal. The manner in which these incidents were engineered gives rise to the suspicion that vested interests working against friendly India-Nepal relations were involved. A Commission of Inquiry has been set up by His Majesty`s Government of Nepal for investigating these incidents.

Four persons participating in the demonstrations and one by-stander are reported to have died in police firing in Kathmandu on December 26. Another two persons died in Rajbiraj, in Saptari district of Nepal, in police firing on December 28.Assessment of loss of property has not been made by His Majesty`s Government of Nepal.

India has long standing ties of friendship and cooperation with Nepal reflected in our shared cultural and social values, extensive people to people contacts and wide ranging economic linkages. Steps have been taken to further strengthen our understanding and

cooperation through regular dialogue both at the official and political level, promotion of trade and investments which have grown substantially, provision of development assistance for infrastructure and human resource development and fostering cultural exchanges including through the provisions of scholarships for Nepalese students. Meetings of Foreign Secretaries, Home Secretaries and Water Resources Secretaries of thetwo countries were held last year. The Indian Minister for Health and Ministers of State for Railways and Commerce also visited Nepal.The Foreign Minister of Nepal visited India followed by the official visit of the Prime Minister from July 31 to August 6, 2000. His detailed discussions with our Prime Minister during the visit provided a renewed impetus to bilateral relations.